

Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

courage is contagious

Viewing cable 06BEIRUT2412, TFLE01: CENTRAL BANK REQUESTS USG ASSISTANCE IN

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06BEIRUT2412**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06BEIRUT2412	2006-07-18 16:20	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Beirut

Appears in these articles:

[not](#)
[yet](#)
[set](#)

VZCZCXRO2310
OO RUEHAG RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK
DE RUEHLB #2412 1991620
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 181620Z JUL 06
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4686
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN 0645
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 002412

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/SINGH/HARDING
LONDON FOR TSOU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/17/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [EFIN](#) [ASEC](#) [LE](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: TFLE01: CENTRAL BANK REQUESTS USG ASSISTANCE IN
TRANSPORTING CURRENCY

Classified By: Ambassador Jeffrey D. Feltman for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This message contains an action message for the Department -- see para 6.

¶2. (C) Finance Minister Jihad Azour alerted us this morning to a forthcoming request from the Lebanese Central Bank for assistance in transporting cash in US dollars from Cyprus to Beirut. The Central Bank planned to consign this cash shipment to a private Lebanese currency trader in Cyprus. However, it would need Israeli permission for the consignees and their shipment to cross the ongoing blockade of the Lebanese coast. Azour asked for USG assistance in securing permission from the Israeli government.

¶3. (C) In a subsequent telephone conversation, Central Bank Governor Riad Salame confirmed this request and said that the amount of cash to be shipped would be in the range of USD 20-30 million. It could be made available for shipment from Cyprus within 24 to 48 hours of a green light from the Israeli government, Salame said.

¶4. (C) Governor Salame told the Ambassador that this shipment would ease a serious shortage of cash in the Lebanese economy -- which is over 70 percent dollarized. This shortage was being wrongly interpreted as a sign of impending financial crisis, and threatening to lead to even greater panic among the general public as a result. Salame strongly urged the Ambassador to secure USG assistance in allowing the shipment to go through.

¶5. (C) Minister Azour asked us to consider having USG personnel, rather than Lebanese consignees, handle the cash from Cyprus to Beirut. That way, there would be less reason for the Israelis to object, as the Israelis could be more certain that nothing but cash was aboard. Also, the Lebanese consignees would not risk being accused by the Israelis of having abused their permission to cross the blockade.

¶6. (C) Comment and action request: Were USG personnel to handle the cash shipment, they could carry it in a helicopter from Cyprus via the Beirut airbridge, which has been operational since July 15. Post requests that the Department work with Embassy Tel Aviv to secure Israeli permission for the cash shipment, and that it make the Beirut airbridge available for this purpose. We know from our economic and financial contacts that, indeed, there are pending signs of panic, as depositors are unable to get currency for transactions (which, in Lebanon, are largely dollar-based). As part of our strategy to help make sure that the Siniora government is not fatally weakened by the Israeli attacks, we hope that we can persuade the Israelis to help us prevent a financial panic that will inevitably cast a deep political shadow over Siniora and his cabinet. End comment and action request.
FELTMAN